

where these wounded warriors come to recuperate. On all these visits to Walter Reed, he spent countless hours talking and sharing stories about the Division and taking his fellow veterans to ball games and other events, including the sharing of meals on many occasions. When many of these wounded warriors could not make it home for the holiday, Bob would reach into his own pocket and pay for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years dinners for soldiers and their families at some of the finest eateries in the Washington, DC, area. Bob says that helping soldiers recover from their war injuries has added years to his life. We know it has added years to the lives of those he helps.

Bob O'Malley would be the first to tell you this is not a one-man mission. He has had help from many different areas. When he decided to help those wounded on the battlefield, for example, he enlisted the help of another veteran, Dom Visconsi, Sr., an original member of the 10th Mountain Division in World War II. He asked Dom to help and Dom was happy to help entertain and support these troops. Many of Bob's friends soon joined the cause as well, and they are a constant presence for the soldiers, whether here or at home. Our Army would not be the best place in the world without the work of veterans such as Sergeant O'Malley, whose life has been synonymous with service, sacrifice, and selflessness.

He is an inspiration to me, our Armed Forces, and our country. He is a hero, and I am proud to call him a friend.

Would the Chair announce morning business now.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the majority controlling the first 30 minutes and the Republicans controlling the final 30 minutes.

The Senator from Rhode Island is recognized.

#### SALUTING OUR WOUNDED WARRIORS AND BOB O'MALLEY

Mr. REED. Mr. President, first, let me join Majority Leader REID in saluting these incredible Americans who are with us today, wounded warriors and Bob O'Malley. As someone who served 12 years in the U.S. Army, my appreciation is profound for what you have done and continue to do. Thank you very much.

I have a circuitous connection with the 10th Mountain Division. My classmate, Buster Hagenbeck, commanded the 10th Mountain Division in Afghanistan, and I was there to visit those great soldiers several times. Thank you for your service and thank you for your inspiration.

#### FINANCIAL REGULATORY REFORM

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I am here today not only to salute these great Americans but also to talk about the urgency of bringing the issue of Wall Street reform to the Senate for open debate and final passage. We have weathered and witnessed the worst financial crisis in the history of the country. We have seen wealth, trillions of dollars of wealth, evaporate because of this financial crisis. To hear people now talking about, well, this is not a good bill—the question is not whether we should delay further or go forward. The question is going forward with purpose, amending the bill on the floor, if necessary, in an open and transparent way so the American public can see we are moving forward on perhaps their No. 1 priority related to the economy, and economic recovery and financial reform are integrated key elements. We cannot have long-run economic success without fundamental financial reform.

We are here today essentially to urge that the anticipated vote on Monday to proceed to the bill be affirmed overwhelmingly to send a message to the American people we are on the job for them, we are doing the work we have to do. We have to deal with a complex and significant legislative measure—but we have to do it now. The time for discussion, the time for consideration privately, has passed. Now we have to act.

I think we have to act because we should recognize the status quo is unacceptable. Those on the other side who have been saying: Not now, not now, not now, essentially are defending the status quo. We have to ask several questions. Who does the status quo favor? It favors the remaining big banks and other financial institutions. We have seen, over the last several days, that these banks are reporting record profits, mostly based on trading. Here is another irony. Because of the system we have today, we are in desperate need of economic activity at the local level, the infusion of capital, lending—all those things. Where are the banks making their huge profits? On trading, essentially taking their money and other people's money and not investing in new productive capacity, but betting on financial products. That is not, in my view, what we should be doing at this moment. We have to recognize that if we do nothing, the banks will continue to operate as they have.

That, I think, has to be corrected. The second question is, what activities are protected by the status quo? I will

tell you. Exotic derivative trading. We saw this week where the Securities and Exchange Commission has made allegations against Goldman Sachs. Now, that will be determined in a court of law.

However, the complexity of the transaction engaged in by Goldman and others, the creation of a synthetic collateralized debt obligation, to translate, was essentially picking out some representative mortgage funds and then betting on them. Somebody took the side that said they would still pay; some would take the side that they would default.

What did that add to our economic capacity? In fact, one of the ironies of this whole crisis is there was such a proliferation of these toxic mortgage bonds that they no longer could sell them at a profit, so they started essentially creating virtual or synthetic securities.

Again, what has it added to the economic productivity of the United States? Not much. In fact, some would argue nothing at all. We have to have a financial sector which performs one of the essential functions of any financial sector, the allocation of capital to productive uses: highways, buildings, education support, all of those things that not only return a profit to the investors but also build up our economic capacity and build up our wealth over the long term.

Other activities that will be protected by the status quo include not only derivatives trading, but dark pools of capital, huge private equity funds that are shadowy in terms of their investment strategy, even to regulators, and the credit rating agencies. They are continuing to operate, and, frankly, we have to say their performance in the last several years was disappointing, and that is being very diplomatic. But they will continue to operate as they have in the past because we will not get the reform that is so necessary.

Of course, the Wall Street salary structure, the incentive compensation, also will continue to be unaffected. So for all of these activities, if you are comfortable with them, then vote against the motion to proceed on Monday evening. If you are uncomfortable with them, if you do not want to see the remaining banks continue to operate as they have, then you have to vote, in my view, to move forward to debate this bill and engage on this issue.

Now, the third question we have to ask is, what does the status quo do for consumers and taxpayers? The answer is very little, if anything at all. We saw in this whole situation consumers who were in some cases misled. In some cases it was obvious they could not afford the credit arrangement they were signing on to, but the incentive on the other side was not to look behind the veneer of the borrower but simply to get the loan closed and then sell it off for securitization profits.